

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Office Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claim Status

Claims 1, 2, 6-14, 16-18 and 27-29 are now pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 10-14, 16, 18, and 27-29 have been amended to even more succinctly define the invention and/or to improve their form. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added.

Specification and Drawings

The specification was objected to for allegedly not providing proper antecedent basis for certain claimed features. The drawings were objected to for allegedly not showing those same features. In particular, the Office Action questioned support for the “concrete reinforcement bar” and the “mateable surfaces”. It is respectfully submitted that clear support for these features can be found in the original specification and drawings. Nevertheless, minor changes have been made to the claims, specification and drawings to further clarify certain support.

The term “reinforcing bars” is used throughout the specification. Note, for example, page 2, line 12. The reinforcing bar is shown in Figure 1 using reference numeral 11, with its loop section referenced by numeral 19. To provide closer correlation, the term “reinforcement” in the claims has been changed to --reinforcing--. While reference to “concrete” reinforcing bars is described in the background section, and such reinforcing bars would be understood by an

ordinarily-skilled artisan to be within the scope of the claims, the term “concrete” has been deleted in the claims to expedite allowance.

The “mateable surfaces” recited in the claims is supported by the “mating sliding surfaces” described at page 5, lines 2 and 3 of the specification. One of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that these surfaces are “mateable” before they are actually mated, and are, therefore, “adapted to mate.” Nevertheless, the claims have been amended to use the terminology from the specification. In addition, the specification has been amended and Figure 3 has been revised to provide reference numerals for the surfaces in question.

In view of the foregoing, the terminology in question is clearly supported by the specification and drawings. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections to the specification and drawings are requested.

Claim Objection

The claims were objected to because each element was not separated by a line indentation, and for reciting terminology not fully supported by the specification and drawings. Independent Claims 1 and 2 have been amended to the format requested by the Examiner. In addition, the terminology questioned by the Examiner is believed to be fully supported by the specification and drawings as discussed above. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the claims are requested.

Claim Rejections

A. 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph

Claims 1, 2, 6-14, 16-18 and 27-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as allegedly containing subject matter which was not adequately described in the specification.

The Office Action questioned several features that are allegedly not adequately supported in the written description. This rejection is traversed.

Support for the concrete reinforcement bar and the mateable surfaces are believed to be adequately described as discussed in response to the specification and drawing objections above. The phrase “transverse sliding action” is discussed at page 4, line 34 with respect to the mating sliding surfaces. One of ordinary skill in the art reviewing the specification and drawings would recognize that the retainer and seat section are secured to one another by the mating sliding surfaces from the laterally offset position. Nevertheless, the terminology has been revised in the claims. As to the term “progressively”, one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize the progressive securing together of the retainer and seat section by sideways sliding engagement of the mating sliding surfaces, especially when tapered surfaces are used. As to the “tension or compression being applied to the bar in a longitudinal direction,” such would be understood by one of ordinary skill in the art in analyzing the forces of the described device shown in the drawings. The terminology in question has been deleted from the claims. The phrase “at the same time blocking longitudinal movement of the bar relative to the assembly” has also been deleted from Claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that all features of the claims are adequately described in the specification. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 112, first paragraph, rejection are requested.

B. 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

.Claims 1, 2, 6-14, 16-18 and 27-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject

matter which applicant regards as the invention. The Office Action suggests that use of the term “progressively” in Claims 1 and 2 is unclear. Applicants respectfully submit that the term “progressively” cannot be viewed in isolation, but within the full context of the claims, as discussed above. One of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that relative movement of the mating sliding surfaces of the seat section and bar retainer would lead to progressive securing of the two elements as the sliding engagement progressed. It is respectfully submitted that the claims particularly point out the subject matter of the invention. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 112, second paragraph, rejection are also requested

C. 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 2, 6-14, 16-18 and 27-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Bazeley et al. (U.S. Patent No. 1,672,867). Claims 1, 2, 6-14, 16-18 and 27-29 were also rejected under § 102(b) as being anticipated by Simons et al. (U.S. Patent No. 2,711,141). These rejections are traversed.

Bazeley et al. describes a chain link that is closed by rotating member B 90° relative to link body A. In Simons et al., sidebar B connects to link A and a bolt or rivet E is inserted to secure link A and bar B in relative position. However, neither Bazeley et al. nor Simons et al. is believed to disclose or suggest at least the structural features of a bar seat section adapted to receive and position a loop section of a reinforcing bar, with the seat section having an upstanding land with a loop section seat extending around the upstanding land, as is recited in independent Claim 1. Nor do the applied patents disclose or suggest at least a seat section comprising an upstanding land and a loop section seat accessible through an opening and extending around the land so that the loop section of a reinforcing bar may be secured to a main

body when positioned on the loop section seat, as is recited in independent Claim 2. That is, at least the upstanding land and its loop section seat are structural features, in combination with the other element recited in the claims, that are not taught by the prior art.

Thus, Bazeley et al., and Simons et al., are not believed to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in independent Claims 1 and 2. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102 rejections are respectfully requested.

Dependent Claims

Claims 6-14, 16-18, 27-29 are either directly or indirectly dependent from independent Claim 1 and 2 and are allowable by virtue of their dependency and in their own right for further defining the invention. For example, none of the prior art discloses a retainer being wedged between bars.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are allowable over the art of record, and that the application is in condition for allowance.

Favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the application are earnestly solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be deemed necessary in connection with this paper to Deposit Account No. 06-1205.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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